GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2384
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2016
Universal Service Obligation Fund
Godse Shri Hemant Tukaram

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all inhabited villages in the country have not been covered with access
to telecom services provided at affordable prices though huge subsidies have been provided to telecom companies under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government is having steady monitoring mechanism on the expenditure of these funds and services delivered by the service providers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the year-wise funds collected under Universal Access Levy (UAL) and expenditure incurred during the last three years and the current year, year and operator-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) & (b) The Government is committed to provide a robust telecom service in all parts of the country including rural, backward & hilly areas. There are 55,669 villages (As per survey conducted in 2014) that do not have mobile coverage. Various schemes are being implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provision of telecom services in commercially unviable rural and remote areas of the country. Mobile coverage to uncovered villages is planned to be provided in a phased manner, subject to availability of financial resources. Government has prioritized to provide mobile coverage in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas, North-Eastern Region, Himalayan States and Islands with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

(c) to (e) Verification of performance, Quality of Service (QoS) and inspection of records for USOF schemes are being carried out by Designated Monitoring Agency. Penalties are imposed as per provisions of Agreement signed by the executing entities with USOF.

The funds are released to the Universal Service providers at field level through the Controller of Communication Accounts Offices of Department of Telecom. The year wise funds collected under Universal Access Levy (UAL) and expenditure incurred during the last three years and the current year and operator wise are at Annexure I and Annexure-II.

Annexure-I

Year-wise fund collected under Universal Access Levy (UAL) and expenditure incurred during the last three years and the current year

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Financial Year UAL collection
(Rs in Crore) Funds disbursed
(Rs in Crore)
2013-14 7896.39 2163.45
2014-15 7537.88 2086.98
2015-16 9835.70 3100.00
2016-17
(Upto October 2016 provisional) 4869.30 3571.43

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Annexure-II

Universal Service Provider − wise Disbursement of subsidy

USP Disbursement of subsidy
(Rupees in Crores)
2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17
Bharat Broadband Network Limited 514.00 1351.86 2415.10 3344.83
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited 1629.72 731.40 678.85 198.68
Dishnet Wireless Limited 1.24 0.04 0.93 0.00
GTL Infrastructure Limited 3.09 0.00 0.00 0.00
KEC International Limited 5.24 1.53 0.00 0.00
Viom Networks Limited (erstwhile QUIPPO Telecom Infrastructure Ltd) 0.33 0.00 0.00 0.00
RAILTEL 0.00 0.00 3.95 27.52
Reliance Communications Infrastructure Limited 2.55 0.21 0.05 0.00
Reliance Communications Limited 0.01 0.00 0.01 0.00
Reuters Market Light Information Services Pvt Ltd (RML ISPL) 0.41 0.35 0.29 0.00
TATA 0.00 0.00 0.53 0.00
The Energy Resource of India 1.95 0.68 0.30 0.40
Vodafone Essar Cellular Limited 3.62 0.90 0.00 0.00
Vodafone Essar South Limited 1.28 0.00 0.00 0.00
Grand Total 2163.45 2086.98 3100.00 3571.43
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